

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-04

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 254006

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TPHY, TBIO, PE

SUBJECT: PRIMATES FOR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH PURPOSES

REF: LIMA A-193

1. SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVE OF MERCK INSTITUTE, PRIVATE MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, HAS ASKED DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE CONCERNING PERUVIAN "PRESIDENTIAL DECISION," WHICH IT LEARNED OF NOVEMBER 15, PROHIBITING THE EXPORT OF 800 MARMOSETS THUS FAR ASSEMBLED UNDER MINAG AUTHORIZATION OF AUGUST 1 FOR CAPTURE OF 1200 SPECIMENS, AND "RETURNING THEM TO THE WILD" ON NOVEMBER 20.

2. ON AUGUST 1, MINAG RESOLUTION NO. 2074-74-AG, AUTHORIZED DR. VICTOR VILLAREJOS, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, TO TRAP 1200 MARMOSETS FOR RESEARCH ON DEVELOPING VACCINES FOR HEPATITIS. ANIMALS TO BE OBTAINED WERE FOR MERCK INSTITUTE FOR THERAPEUTIC RESEARCH UNDER CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT WITH LSU. THIS RESOLUTION AND CONTRACT REFERRED TO IN REPAIR.

3. UNDER THIS TRAPPING PERMIT, ABOUT 800 MARMOSETS HAD THUS FAR BEEN ASSEMBLED BY THE LOCAL TRAPPING AGENT, DR. F. MONCLOA, PERUVIAN VETERINARIAN AND WERE AWAITING ISSUANCE OF AN EXPORT PERMIT. MERCK INSTITUTE

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REPRESENTATIVE LEARNED ON NOV. 15 FROM DR. VILLAREJOS

THAT A PERUVIAN "PRESIDENTIAL DECISION OR DECREE" JUST
MADE WOULD PROHIBIT EXPORT OF THE ANIMALS AND THEY "WERE

TO BE RETURNED TO THE WILD" ON NOVEMBER 20.

4. MERCK REPRESENTATIVE STATES THAT INABILITY TO OBTAIN
THESE MARMOSETS WOULD SERIOUSLY CURTAIL WORK ON
HEPATITIS AND CANCER. MERCK HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE
THAT EXPORT PERMIT WOULD ONLY BE FORMALITY ONCE
TRAPPING PERMIT OBTAINED.

5. MERCK IS MAKING PARALLEL APPROACH TO PERUVIAN
EMBASSY BUT ASKS OUR ASSISTANCE IN ANY POSSIBLE WAY.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTED TO CONFIRM IF SUCH
A "PRESIDENTIAL DECISION OR DECREE" HAS BEEN MADE AND
IF SO ASCERTAIN TO EXTENT POSSIBLE BASIS FOR DECISION.
WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON FEASIBILITY OF
DELAY IN "RELEASE OF ANIMALS TO THE WILD" PENDING
CLARIFICATION. INGERSOLL

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